



Rhode Island Department of Health

3 Capitol Hill, Providence, RI 02908 | www.health.ri.gov

For: Immediate release

Date: April 2, 2020

Contacts: Joseph Wendelken (401-378-0704)

For ASL version, click local TV stations:

WPRI12 (CBS)

<https://www.wpri.com/health/coronavirus/raimondo-to-answer-childrens-questions-at-1-pm-briefing/>

Governor Gina Raimondo's Facebook Video

<https://www.facebook.com/223653951015444/videos/208875777212333/>

Certified Deaf Interpreter: Charley Thorn; ASL Interpreters: Rayne Depukat, Robb Remigio

COVID-19 Testing Expanded to All Symptomatic Rhode Islanders

- Gov. Gina Raimondo, alongside First Gentleman Andy Moffit, sat in front of a fireplace and spoke directly to Rhode Island kids about the ongoing pandemic. The Gov. and First Gentleman answered about 20 questions sent in from kids across the state, ranging from what she's doing to protect first responders and healthcare workers to whether the Easter bunny will be quarantined.
- **COVID-19 Testing.** The RI COVID-19 Testing capacity has expanded. All Rhode Islanders who have symptoms of COVID-19 are encouraged to call a healthcare provider to get scheduled for a test. This increase in testing capacity gives Rhode Island the opportunity to test more people with symptoms and to get a better idea of how much virus is circulating in Rhode Island.
- **Data.** 91 new positive cases, total count to 657.

Full version

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COVID-19 Testing Expanded to All Symptomatic Rhode Islanders

With Rhode Island's coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) testing capacity now expanded, all Rhode Islanders who have symptoms of COVID-19 are encouraged to call a healthcare provider to get scheduled for a test. It is critical that people who are experiencing symptoms also self-isolate and have as little contact with others as possible.

The symptoms of COVID-19 include any of these symptoms: fever, cough, shortness of breath, muscle aches (myalgias), chills, runny nose or stuffy nose, sore throat, headache, or diarrhea. People with COVID-19 have experienced a range of different symptoms. As we learn more about the virus, we know that some people with COVID-19 have only experienced one or two mild symptoms.

Currently, a person can only be tested for COVID-19 in Rhode Island if testing is ordered by a healthcare provider. If you do not have a primary care provider, call an urgent care center. Call first before going to a healthcare facility (unless it is an emergency).

The expanded approach of testing all people with symptoms represents a significant change. COVID-19 testing in Rhode Island had previously been limited to the members of certain priority populations who are more vulnerable to complications from COVID-19 (such as nursing home residents), or who are members of Rhode Island's critical infrastructure workforce (such as healthcare workers). This increase in testing capacity gives Rhode Island the opportunity to test more people with symptoms and to get a better idea of how much virus is circulating in Rhode Island.

The expanded number of tests that Rhode Island can now process are being run at RIDOH's State Health Laboratories and at several hospital and private laboratories.

COVID-19 Data Update

An additional 91 Rhode Islanders have tested positive for COVID-19. This brings Rhode Island's total to 657. Rhode Island also has two additional COVID-19 associated fatalities, bringing Rhode Island's fatality total to 12. Both individuals were females, one in her 80s and one in her 90s. A full data summary for Rhode Island is [available online](#).

Key messages for the public

- Anyone who is sick should stay home and self-isolate (unless going out for testing or healthcare).
- The people who live with that person and who have been in direct close contact with that person should self-quarantine for 14 days. Direct close contact means being within approximately 6 feet of a person for a prolonged period.
- Help is available for people living in quarantine or isolation due to COVID-19. Visit www.RIDelivers.com for connections to groceries, home supplies, restaurants, and mutual aid groups. People can also call 2-1-1.
- Groups of more than five people should not be gathering. Always avoid close personal contact with other people in public.
- Healthcare workers should not be going to work if they are sick (even with mild symptoms).

- Through April 13th, there will be no on-site food consumption for restaurants, bars, coffee shops, or other food establishments in Rhode Island. (Establishments with a food license can continue to conduct pick-up, drive-thru and delivery only.)
- People without symptoms should not be tested for COVID-19. Testing individuals with no symptoms is not recommended by CDC.
- People who think they have COVID-19 should call their healthcare provider. Do not go directly to a healthcare facility without first calling a healthcare provider (unless you are experiencing a medical emergency).
- Early data suggest that older adults are twice as likely to experience serious COVID-19 illness.
- People with general, non-medical questions about COVID-19 can visit www.health.ri.gov/covid, write to RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov, or call 401-222-8022. This is the COVID-19 Hotline that RIDOH has available to the public.
- Everyone can help stop the spread of viruses in Rhode Island.
 - o Get your flu shot, and make sure the people around you do the same.
 - o Wash your hands often throughout the day. Use warm water and soap. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
 - o Cough or sneeze into your elbow.
 - o Stay home and do not leave your house if you are sick, unless it is for emergency medical care.
 - o Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way.

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